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McNamara, CIA Hit by Fulbright

By Robert Buckhorn
United Press International

Sen. J. William Fulbright said yesterday that the "tremendous power" of the Defense Department must not be allowed to dominate the nation's foreign policy, including its strategy in Vietnam.

Fulbright tied the Defense Department's growing influence to two main factors—the persuasiveness of Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara and the money it controls.

Congress seems to give the department everything it asks, Fulbright said. "We take their enormous appropriation requests on faith," he said in a television interview on "Meet the Press" (NBC, WRC).

Fulbright listed the CIA, along with the Defense Department, as an example of a government agency's expanding beyond what he considered its normal function.

He said both the Defense Department and the CIA "have a very great role in determining" policy in Vietnam.

Fulbright termed McNamara a "very fine and efficient administrator" but said he was a "very persuasive" man who helped make the Defense Department a strong influence on the nation's policy planners.

Fulbright was quick to point out that President Johnson was not a man who was dominated by any adviser. The President is too powerful a man for that, he said. But Fulbright said the Defense Department's influence did trickle down through the world of business due to its contract-letting powers.

He said it even wields power in his own "remote" state of Arkansas.

Because of this "tremendous power," Fulbright said the nation must watch it carefully to make sure it does not become "a dominant one" in government.

As for negotiations in Vietnam, Fulbright said "it might be well to make a second attempt to trigger talks with North Vietnam by suspending U.S. bombing raids."

Despite the fact that the strategy was tried earlier this year, Fulbright said it should be tried again for a "reasonable time."